Abstract of the Disclosure

Methods and systems for link-level alignment between processing modules or cards and distributed processing system are disclosed. According to one method, cards that support link level communications parameter negotiation exchange link status signal units (LSSUs) to negotiate a common set of link level communications. For link level communications between a card that supports parameter negotiation and a card that does not support link level communications parameter negotiation, LSSUs are exchanged, and the cards establish link level communications using a default set of parameter values.